INDIAN LIFE IN THE NORTHWEST.

Courtship and Marriage of White Men to Dusky Maidens.

AMONG the Northwestern tribes of Indians innocence is as marked among the girls as their color. The impression that the red maiden does not entertain a high standard of morality is an error, for she is taught as other girls are, and grows up with well-developed ideas of the responsibilities of life and a firm resolution to discharge them. Educated in the faith that she was ordained to work, she trains herself to undergo hard labor, and at sixteen years of age she is sturdy and strong, brave against fatigue, and a perfect housewife. She may not possess New England notions of cleanliness, but she takes not a little pride in her personal appearance, and in the arrangement of her lodge she displays some crude ideas of taste and a certain amount of neatness. If she marry a white man, she makes him a good wife as long as she lives with him. His home is her sole care and his comfort her ambition. She thinks of him and for him, and makes it her study to please him and make him respect and love her. She recognizes in him one of the superior race, and by her dignity and devotion endears herself to him and struggles to make him happy.

At the agencies on the upper frontier thousands of men are employed, and it is not an exaggeration to say that the majority of them have Indian wives and live happily. They are not sought after by the maidens, for the Indian girl's custom is to remain quiet until the marriage contract is made and the marriage portion paid over. The husband must have the dowry, with which he must invest his projected mother-in-law before the ceremony takes place. The process is a little out of the usual run, and a description may be of interest. The aspiring bridegroom must be well known in the tribe before he can hope to win a wife. Her people want to thoroughly understand him and know if he can support not only her but also her relatives in the event of a pinch. He must be a kind-hearted man, with a temper warranted to keep in any domestic climate, and he must have a good lodge and at least half a dozen horses. If he be and have all these, he can a-wooing go. Selecting the lady, he makes application to her mother, and at a council the price is fixed upon. If the girl be especially pretty, her mother will demand a gun, two horses and a lot of provisions, blankets and cloth. A gun is valued at $50, a horse at $20, and he must furnish material to bring the amount up to from $100 to $150. Then he tries to beat the dame down, and if he succeeds he knows there is some reason for letting the girl go, if not, he understands that he is making a good choice. The courtship is left entirely to the mother. She communicates the intelligence to the bride-elect, who dutifully sets upon preparing the lodge for the nuptials. Relatives and friends congregate, form a circle, pound a drum and have a feast, at the conclusion of which the man and girl stand up. A blanket is thrown over their heads, under which they exchange vows of fidelity, after which the mother blesses them and the ceremony is complete. But it fares badly with a man who plentifully stocks his wedding lodge. His wife will give away everything he gives her, and stores intended to last a month will disappear in an hour. He, if he be cautious, will give her barely enough to eat until he teaches economy, a lesson which once thoroughly learned she never forgets. For some little time after the wedding the newly-made relatives haunt the happy lodge, demanding that they be feasted and cared for. Woe unto him who accedes in the slightest. A firm refusal, well persevered in, is all that will save him a life of misery.

In Northern Montana and up through the northwest territory, on the Dominion side, is a whole nation of people who have sprung from such alliances. In the early days the French explorers who settled down had their two dusky wives unto themselves and lived and died in a plentitude of home comforts. Their offspring partook of the mercurial disposition of their fathers and the gregarious nature of their mothers. They live together and marry and intermarry, and though they have no notion of civilized life, they are far above the Indians in their habits and customs. They speak French, a little English and all the Indian dialects, love horses and whisky, have no ambition beyond the care of their families. They are the best plainsmen on the prairies, and in a fight will soundly whip any Indian band that does not outnumber them. The dread in which they are held by their more savage neighbors they have honestly earned, for, while they are not more brave in warfare than the Indian, they are more skillful and crafty. A peculiarity is the ugliness of the men and the rare beauty of some of the women. In color they are a light to a dark brown, with black eyes and straight hair. The complexion of the women is soft, fairer than that of the men, and the features are more regular and the expression pleasant. Leading a sort of nomadic life, traveling in carts and living in tents, they have no education, but in their address and bearing are cordial and courteous, and to a stranger on the prairie are hospitable and generous. They will brave any danger to see a horse-race, and are inveterate gamblers. As hunters they have no equal, and consequently are thoroughly hated, for where they are there is no game for others.

The progeny of the agency "squaw man," on the contrary, takes but little after his mother. A half-breed, like himself, he holds in contempt, shunning him as he would a snake, and seeking the companionship of the whites. Next to his kind, he hates an Indian, and his loftiest aspiration is to become an army scout. He drifts around the forts an idle, worthless vagabond, spurned by the savages and only tolerated by the pale-faces. Ordinarily, he is treacherous and unreliable, the very opposite of his mother, who is all faith, or his father, who may have been true as steel. The mixture of blood does not appear to produce satisfactory results, though an occasional exceptional case turns up to make the deficiencies of the rest the more conspicuous. Whether these unfortunate offspring trace their natures to some peculiar condition founded on the mixture, or whether the Indian girl or the white man has degenerated since the day of French settler and early prairie maiden, is a matter of severe speculation.

According to prairie law, it is disreputable in a white man to abandon his dusky wife until she has grown too old to work for him. Then he may send her back to her tribe if he so elect. She may not desert the husband for another white man, but she may leave him for an Indian who wants to marry her, provided she have no children. If a squaw desires to abandon her husband, the Indian of her choice must pay back the price originally paid to her mother. He may abate no jot or tittle, and it is in such payment that the divorce is perfected. She then becomes a single woman, free to marry, but she can not live in the vicinity inhabited by her husband. She must move away with her new venture. Such divorces are not infrequent. It is a difficult thing for the squaw to perfectly adapt herself to her white husband. He may be of the kindliest disposition, but his ways are not her ways, and though she struggle with all her strength to draw closer to him and try to make her existence a part of his, she can not make him one of her kind, and she drifts away from him. The birth of children directs her thoughts into a new channel and lessens the chasm between them, but without them he has but little hope of keeping her to himself. Sooner or later she will find her affinity.—*Cor. Brooklyn Eagle.*

A Mariner's Tale.

"THIS sudden close of navigation is a bad thing on the vessels out," remarked an old sail-loft man yesterday, "but I don't expect our lake marine will ever see another such time as in 1843. I was sailing in the Albatross then, and within twenty-four hours Lake Huron froze six inches thick. On the morning of Nov. 10 it was as warm as June. Next day we were fast in the ice under the lee of an island, 100 miles from the main land."

"What was the name of that island?" asked a man who was chewing crackers behind the stove.

"Gentlemen," said the saloon-keeper, "this sail-loft man is a person of truth, and I hope there will be no further interruptions."

"There we were, fast as a rock, and the weather growing colder all the time," continued the narrator. "At the end of the next four days the ice around us was twenty-two inches thick."

"Who measured it?" queried an old man with a frost-bitten ear.

"Gentlemen, if there is any man here who doesn't believe that ice was twenty-two inches thick, out he goes!" exclaimed the saloonist, as he struck his fist down.

"At the end of five days we hadn't a scrap of provisions left. There were seven men of us, and starvation stared us in the face. We fried and ate our boot-legs, made soup of the Mate's fur hat, and scraped along for three or four days, and then we drew lots to see who should die. It fell on the cook."

"Was he a nigger?" asked the man over a barrel.

"Gentlemen, we must have order here!" shouted the owner of the place.

"I was selected to kill him," sadly continued the sail-loft man. "I put him to sleep with morphine and then sawed his head off. He lasted us just three days, and then we were as hungry as ever. The next man to go was a sailor from Chicago, but he had chewed plug-tobacco so long that it made us all sick. His name was Smith."

"First name, if you please?" queried a boy who was working next door.

"Young man, you go right out of here!" ordered the saloonist, and the boy had to obey.

"We next killed the Captain. Ah! he was fine eating, I tell you! He had used just enough brandy to season him clear through. We let him commit suicide by hanging. We ate the last of him on Christmas."

"With cranberry sauce?" asked a big deck-hand.

"What was they doing with cranberry sauce out there?" demanded the saloonist. "This is a true story, and I know it."

"Well, we kept drawing lots and eating each other up, and by the 1st of February I was the only one left. On the 2d of February I had eaten the last morsel of the last man, and was as hungry as a bear, when somebody hailed. I looked over the side and there was a farmer from the island half a mile away."

"Was the island inhabited?"

"It was, but we couldn't see the houses for the woods. There we'd been eating each other up for three months, with farms and plenty right under our noses! The farmer thought we might want a change, and he'd come out to offer us board at twelve shillings per week."

"And you went with him?"

"No. I saw signs of a break-up, and I didn't dare leave the schooner. The farmer was stout and fat, and I figured that he'd last me over a week. I therefore killed him and stuck by the craft. The ice began to break up that night, and in three days I was at Port Huron with more than half of the farmer left."

"Did you ever tell this story before?" asked a Captain who had listened without a word.

"Never."

"Will you tell it again for a glass of beer?"

"I will."

"Then go ahead. I believe three of that crew were with me in the old Mary Jones when we were cast away in the Pacific, and that they helped me eat a woman and three children. Please speak slowly and distinctly, and when you get to these men describe them as minutely as possibly."

When our reporter came away the sail-loft man had cleared his voice and begun:

"This sudden close of navigation is a bad thing on the vessels out."—*Detroit Free Press.*

MR. PUGH, the new United States Senator-elect from Alabama, is sixty-one years of age, and is known in the South as a man of exceptional ability. He was left an orphan when eleven years old, and while still a youth he carried a frontier mail two days in the week to earn money to pay his school expenses the rest of the time.

GENERAL MCCLELLAN has received a gift of the flint-lock pistol carried by Winfield Scott during the Mexican War.

History of Zero.

"ZERO" on the common thermometer, like the fanciful names of the constellations, is a curious instance of the way wise men's errors are made immortal by becoming popular. It may be worth while to say that the word itself (zero) comes to us through the Spanish from the Arabic, and means empty, hence, nothing. In expressions like "90 degrees Fahr.," the abbreviation "Fahr." stands for Fahrenheit, a Prussian merchant of Dantzic, on the Baltic Sea. His full name was Gabriel Daniel Fahrenheit. From a boy he was a close observer of nature, and when only 19 years old, in the remarkably cold winter of 1709, he experimented by putting snow and salt together and noticed that it produced a degree of cold equal to the coldest day of the year. And that day was the coldest day that the oldest inhabitant could remember. Gabriel was the more struck with the coincidence of his little scientific discovery, and hastily concluded that he had found the lowest degree of temperature known in the world, either natural or artificial. He called the degree zero, and constructed a thermometer, or rude weather-glass, with a scale graduating up from zero to boiling point, which he numbered 212, and the freezing point 32—because, as he thought, mercury contracted the thirty-second of its volume on being cooled down from the temperature of freezing water to zero; and expanded a one-hundred-and-eightieth on being heated from the freezing to the boiling point.

Time showed that this arrangement, instead of being truly scientific, was as arbitrary as the divisions of the Bible into verses and chapters, and that these two points no more represented the real extremes of temperature than "from Dan to Beersheba" expressed the exact extremes of Palestine. But Fahrenheit's thermometer had been widely adopted, with its inconvenient scale, and none thought of any better until his name became an authority, for Fahrenheit finally abandoned trade and gave himself up to science.

The three countries which use Fahrenheit are England, Holland and America. Russia and Germany use Raumer's thermometer, in which the boiling point is counted 80 degrees above the freezing point. France uses the centigrade thermometer, so called because it marks the boiling point 100 degrees from freezing point. On many accounts the centigrade system is the best, and the triumph of convenience will be attained when zero is made the freezing point, and when the boiling point is put 100 or 1,000 degrees from it, and all the subdivisions are fixed decimally. If Fahrenheit had done this at first, or even it he had made this one of his many improvements after the public adopted his error, the luck of opportunity, which was really his, would have secured to his invention the patronage of the world.

A Proposal of Marriage.

Notwithstanding the testimony of high-flown romances, a proposal of marriage is generally delivered in anything but glib terms. The following is the quaintest method of making a proposal which has ever come to our knowledge: A gentleman had long been paying attention to a young lady whom he was very anxious to marry, but could not screw up his courage to the sticking-point. At last he resolved to take the first opportunity which presented itself of asking the momentous question. No sooner, however, had he formed this resolution than fortune seemed to desert him. He often met the fair one, but never could get a chance of speaking to her alone. Driven to desperation, he one day succeeded in accomplishing his purpose at a dinner party. Unfortunately, the lady was on the opposite side of the table. He was, however, equal to the occasion, and tearing out a leaf from his pocket-book wrote on it under cover of the table, "Will you be my wife? Write Yes or No at the foot of this." Calling a servant he whispered to him to take the note—which, of course, was folded up—to "the lady in blue opposite." The servant did as he was directed, and the gentleman, in an agony of suspense, watched him give it to the lady, and fixed his eyes, with badly disguised eagerness, to try and judge from her expression how the quaintly-made offer was received. He had forgotten one thing—namely, that ladies seldom carry pencils about them at a dinner party. His love was, however, not to be baffled by so trifling an obstacle, and, after reading the note calmly, the lady turned to the messenger and said, "Tell the gentleman Yes." They were married in due time.

A German Princess.

IT is said that the Queen has promised Prince William, who will be her first married grandson, and his bride, Princess Augusta Victoria, of Schleswig-Holstein Sonderburg-Augustenburg, to be present at their wedding in February next. Should the report be true, says London *Truth*, the Prussian court will be honored by a visit which has not been repeated since 1858, when her Majesty's eldest daughter was wedded to the son of the then Prince of Prussia.

It is well known that Princess Augusta Victoria is not a rich Princess. Her dowry will be smaller than that of many a city merchant's daughter. But "the money question" was left out of consideration when the Crown Princess of Germany looked about for a fitting helpmate for her son. Like the Vicar of Wakefield, she has chosen a young lady with qualities that will wear well. Clever and yet sensible, all who know the bride admit her to be. Spiritually she was nourished on rationalism of the kind which the Crown Princess inherited from her father. Her charitable qualities, the *burgerliehkeit* with which she cuts bread and butter for the little boys and girls of Pottsdam and Charlottenburg, her engaging manner and her soft Teutonic cast of beauty will endear her to the Vaterland. As a German is no German if not intensely patriotic, it is not surprising that the *trousseau* of Prince William's bride is to be made entirely in Germany and of German materials. The silk will be manufactured near the Rhine and the lace in Silesia. The Emperor's presents, will, as usual, be supplied from Berlin.

—Two sightless lovers have been married in Cincinnati. They went it blind.

Our Young Folks.

THE OLD YEAR'S GOOD-BYE.

THE Old Year stands in the church-yard snow,
Blowing his frosty fingers;
"'Tis time I were going long ago,"
He muttered, yet still he lingers.

White is his beard with the drift of age,
And white with the wintry weather;
He turns his back to the tempest's rage,
And his body bends trembling together.

Anxious he peers through the stormy night;
Listens with eager ear;
"I can hear no steps in the snow-drifts light,
But surely he must be near!"

With bounding step and cheek aglow
Comes a stranger, young and fair;
Little he cares for the driving snow,
Or the biting midnight air.

"Good evening, Old Year!" "Good evening, New:
I am glad you are comeat last;
Since darkness fell I've been waiting for you,
And my strength is failing fast.

"But I could not go till I'd seen you here,
And your promise true had heard.
Pardon an old man's natural fear;
Bear with his parting word:

"*Take care of the children!* the wide world round,
I've looked in their faces to-day;
I've listened to catch each merry sound
As they shouted and romped at play.

"I knew 'twas the last I should see the sight,
And I whispered to each, Good-bye:
But I would not cloud their faces bright,
Would not let them hear me sigh.

"They are yours, New Year; I give them to you;
Take them all in your strong, young hand;
And I charge you to your trust be true,
Be the guardian of Babyland.

"Cover the hills with coasting-snow;
Pave the streams with smoothest ice;
Heap high the fire in each home as you go;
Spread thick each generous slice.

"To the nooks where the earliest flowers are found
Lead the little ones' roaming feet;
Strew violets thick on each tiny grave
Where sleep the babies sweet.

"Show the children the nests whence the birdlings fly;
Let them roll in the scented hay;
Let their kites mount high in the summer sky;
Give them many a bright nutting day.

"Make Christmas a time of gladdest glee,
When winter comes again;
Load every bough of the Christmas tree
With jolliest presents then.

"Go with the little folks to school;
Keep bright each little mind;
Help them obey the teachers' rule,
And make the teachers kind.

"In Sunday-school fill their hearts with love,
As of Jesus' love they're told;
Oh, train them all for the home above
Where the years grow never old!"

The New Year bowed with earnest look;
Promised his tender care;
And the old man's trembling hand he took,
As they stood a moment there.

Then the good Old Year was lost in the night,
But hark! children's voices clear,
In every home, with the dawning light,
"To all a happy NEW YEAR!"

—*Rev. Edward D. Eaton, in Chicago Advance.*

DOT'S NEW-YEAR'S PARTY.

DOT LEONARD sat listening to her father as he read at morning prayers, her little chair drawn up beside her mother's, and her hand in hers. They always sat so. Dot thought she could listen best that way, and mamma liked it, too.

This morning Dr. Leonard read the fourteenth chapter of Luke, and Dot listened attentively, though mamma wondered what brought such a perplexed look on her little daughter's face at the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth verses.

She forgot to ask her, after prayers, for word came that Mrs. Gray's baby was dying, and she went right over to help the poor mother bear her great trouble, so she did not learn about it till some hours after, when she and Dot were sitting together in the sunny nursery.

Then mamma said, "Whose birthday is it next Saturday?"

"Mine, and New-Year's-Day, too," said Dot, looking up with a quick smile; for birthdays and holidays meant much happiness to this little girl, the only child of loving parents, in a beautiful home.

"What do you want to do, little woman, because you are eight years old," asked mamma.

"May I say just what I want?" answered Dot.

"Certainly, darling," said mamma, wondering.

"Then mamma, if you are perfectly willing," said Dot, hesitating, and dropping a stitch in the dolly's afghan she was crocheting, "I should like to make a feast."

Mrs. Leonard believed in letting little girls talk frankly, especially to their mothers, so without seeming to notice Dot's peculiar way of speaking, she said, "Yes, dear, if that is what you would like best; and whom will you invite to your feast?" and drawing away the pretty worsted, she took Dot on her lap.

"Grandma Baine first," said Dot, smoothing her mother's brown hair with quiet hands.

"*Grandma Baine!*" exclaimed mamma, this time so much surprised she could not help showing it, for Grandma Baine was a poor, blind woman who lived in the neighborhood, and knit mittens and stockings. "What made you think of her?"

"She knit my play-mittens for me," said Dot, "and gave me a bright ball made of ends of yarn, and I want her to come."

"Who else?" asked mamma.

"Jane Hesler," promptly answered Dot, showing that the list had been made up in her mind before. Jane Hesler was a lame girl in the little brown house on the corner; she could not leave her chair, but made baskets for a living, one of which had found its way into Dot's hand, full of flowers from her table in the south window.

"Who next?" again asked Mrs. Leonard.

"I would like the washerwoman's little girls to come, mamma, for when she washed my doll clothes Monday she said she wondered what Kitty and Molly would say if they saw them; and I want them to have a good play in my baby-house."

"Well," said Mrs. Leonard, "any others?"

"Yes, mother dear, *do* you suppose we *could* find that little boy who begged here yesterday? He was so ragged and dirty, and looked at Mary's cakes as if he had never tasted anything like them; so I gave him two, though Mary said I mustn't. I'd like to have him come if we could find him, for he would like the cake and nice things so."

"Dot, darling," said Mrs. Leonard, drawing her closer and giving her one, two and three kisses, "why don't you want your cousins and schoolmates invited?"

"Why, mamma," said Dot, looking up with surprise, "what did papa read this morning in the Bible? When ye make a feast do not invite your friends or rich neighbors, for they will invite you again; but ask the poor, the lame and the blind, and *ye shall be blessed;* so I want Grandma Baine and Jane Hesler and Kitty and Molly Flannigan and that poor little boy, if we can find him."

Mamma answered, cheerily, "We will try, dear; he said he lived on Water street, near the wharf, and that his name was Tommy Dune. I promised to come and see his sick mother, so we will find him perhaps in time for New Year's Day. I am glad you want to make these poor people happy, dear;" and as Dot jumped down to run away and tell her dolls about it, Mrs. Leonard said, with a happy smile, "God bless the precious child!"

The sun shone his brightest on Dot's birthday, as if he wanted to help make the day a happy one; and had you been so fortunate as to live opposite Dr. Leonard's, you would have been interested in seeing the novel company arrive.

Dot herself went after Grandma Baine, whose old wrinkled face fairly shone with delight, as her little guide gently led her into the house.

Dot's father went for Jane Hesler, and carried her in his strong arms from the carriage into the house. The little Flannigans soon came, hand in hand, looking shyly about at the beautiful house and well-kept grounds.

Last of the guests was Tommy Dune, no longer ragged and dirty, but clean and comfortable, smiling with surprise, as little Miss Dot came to meet him at the front door, fearing he would go around to the kitchen, as before.

Indoors the happiness was complete.

Dot had decided to wear her plainest dress, that the others should not feel uncomfortable by contrast; but she could not keep the dear little face from being "the sweetest in the world," mamma thought, as she tied back the brown curls, and gave ker eight kisses, and "one to grow on."

Dot had arranged the sitting-room with especial reference to her friends, as mamma thought they would feel more at home there than in the big parlors, and you would have liked a peep in there, I know.

Grandma Baine sat in a rocking-chair by the west window, where she could feel the sunshine, and hear Dick, the canary, sing right above her head, while Dot stood by, and described the room and the company to her, Jane Hesler lay in mamma's sick-chair, for the ride had tired her a little, but was looking happily at the beautiful things she saw all about her. Dot had put a little table beside the chair, with books and a portfolio of pictures on it, for Jane to look at as soon as she was rested. Molly and Kitty were already in ecstasies over the baby-house, brought down from the nursery, and could hardly believe their eyes at the sight of dolls "dressed like rale ladies," as Molly said, and the completely furnished house, from looking-glass to dust-pan and broom.

Dot had been afraid Tommy "wouldn't feel at home," but he had marched in with no sign of bashfulness, and stood by the fire taking in the comforts and beauties of the room with great satisfaction. Suddenly his eye caught sight of a picture across the room. It was the head of a dog, the great intelligent eyes seeming to meet yours with a look of friendly recognition. Immediately he stood in front of it, his face full of delight, and turning to Jane he exclaimed, "Aint that bully?" never seeing Dot's look of mingled amusement and reproof.

Dr. Leonard came home to the supper, and helped them all to the dainties mamma had prepared, as politely and generously as if they had been the President's family; and they all went home with something to remind them on the morrow of their holiday.

And little Dot was happy.

To be sure, one of the little Flannigans broke her doll's rocking-chair, and Tommy soiled one of her prettiest picture-books. "But," said Dot, as she and mamma were talking it over at bedtime, "I know they had a good time, and I am glad I asked them. Do you know, mamma, I kept hoping all the time that I might be one of '*the blessed.*'"—*Youth's Companion.*

What Makes the Man.

MANY people forget that character grows; that it is not something to put on, ready made, with womanhood and manhood, but day by day, here a little and there a little, grows with the growth and strengthens with the strength, until, good or bad, it becomes almost a coat of mail. Prompt, reliable, conscientious, yet clear-headed and energetic, when do you suppose he developed all these admirable qualities? When he was a boy. Let us see the way in which a boy of ten years gets up in the morning, works, plays, studies, and we will tell you just what kind of a man he will make. The boy that is late at breakfast, and late at school, stands a poor chance to be a punctual man. He who neglects his duties, be they ever so small, and then excuses himself by saying, "I forgot? I did not think!" will never be a reliable man. And the boy who finds pleasure in the suffering of weaker things will never be a noble, generous, kindly man—a gentleman.

MR. O'DWYER rents a shanty on Galveston Avenue from old man Chrysler, a prominent citizen. Yesterday Chrysler called in to collect the rent, and O'Dwyer showed him over the house, complaining of its inconveniences. Said O'Dwyer: "Mishter Chrysler, your house is intoirly too low on the ground to be healthy, the caleings are too low, and the door ain' high enough." "Mr. O'Dwyer," said Chrysler, "is there anything about this house that is high enough to suit you?" "Indade there is." "What is it?" "The rint, be jabers."—*Galveston News.*

QUEEN VICTORIA, at Balmoral, worships in a raised pew so near the pulpit that she could almost shake hands with the minister.